

MR. FILLMORE'S VIEWS ON SLAVERY.

Answer to "The Crisis."

Published by the Democratic State Central Committee.

To the People of Louisiana :

ON the 9th instant, there appeared in this city, a publication called "The Crisis," under the direction of the Executive Committee of the Central Rough and Ready Club, the object of which is announced to be, to vindicate the character of *Millard Fillmore*, from the alleged "slanders," "detractions," "calumnies" and "misrepresentations" of his political opponents in this State, with regard to his votes in Congress on the subject of Slavery. Acting, apparently, in combination with the well-known letter-writer-general of the Taylor party in New Orleans, these gentlemen are endeavoring to get themselves into a furious passion with democrats for their foul and fraudulent conduct towards their candidate for the Vice Presidency.

Great stress has been laid upon the omission in the pamphlet, hitherto put in circulation in this State; of the first of the Atherton resolutions. That resolution contained the declaration of the absence from Congress of any Constitutional powers over the subject of Slavery *in the several States* of the confederacy, and is a proposition which, so far as our knowledge extends, is concurred in by Giddings and other rabid abolitionists, who, all admit, that, *in the States*, their purposes cannot be carried out through Congressional action. The omission of the resolution may be regretted, on the ground that without it, the record was incomplete; but every candid man who reads the statements of the now famous "Fillmore Pamphlet," will, we think, be disposed to admit that its production was not necessary to show that Millard Fillmore's connection with abolition whilst he was a member of Congress, is incompatible with the interests of the South and abhorrent to her feelings. Mr. Fillmore's vote against the suspension of the rules, for the purpose of considering the Atherton resolutions, will not, we imagine, be con-

sidered by many as a very particularly friendly demonstration of his attachment to the rights of the slave States. That he did so vote the "Crisis" cannot deny.

That Millard Fillmore is in favor of every measure of the anti-slavery party, calculated to have a practical effect, is beyond the shadow of a doubt; we have the proof from himself; and he probably knows his own mind as fully as the Executive Committee of the Central Rough and Ready Club of New Orleans. This proof we now lay before you, in the shape of a letter from Mr. Fillmore to W. Mills, chairman of the Anti-Slavery Society of the county of Erie, (N.Y.)

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BUFFALO, October 17, 1838.

Sir: Your communication of the 15th instant as chairman of a committee appointed by "*The Anti-Slavery Society of the County of Erie*," has just come to hand. You solicit my answer to the following interrogatories:

1st. Do you believe that petitions to Congress on the subject of slavery and the slave-trade ought to be received, read and respectfully considered by the representatives of the people?

2d. Are you opposed to the annexation of Texas to this Union, under any circumstances, so long as slaves are held therein?

3d. Are you in favor of Congress exercising all the constitutional power it possesses, to abolish the internal slave-trade between the States?

4th. Are you in favor of immediate legislation for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia?

I am much engaged, and have no time to enter into an argument, or to explain at length my reasons for my opinion. I shall, therefore, content myself, for the present, by answering ALL your interrogatories in the AFFIRMATIVE, and leave for some future occasion a more extended discussion on the subject.

I would, however, take this occasion to say, that in thus frankly giving my opinion, I would not desire to have it understood in the nature of a pledge. At the same time that I seek no disguises, but freely give my sentiments on any subject of interest to those for whose suffrages I am a candidate, I am opposed to give any pledge that shall deprive me hereafter of all discretionary power. My own character must be the guaranty for the general correctness of my legislative deportment. On every subject I am bound to deliberate before I act, and especially as a legislator—to possess myself of all the information, and listen to every argument that can be adduced by my associates, before I can give a final vote. If I stand pledged to a particular course of action, I cease to be a responsible agent, but I become a mere machine. Should subsequent events show, beyond all doubt, that the course I had become pledged to pursue was ruinous to my constituents and disgraceful to myself, I have no alternative, no opportunity for repentance, and there is no power to absolve me from my obligation. Hence the impropriety, not to say absurdity, in my view, of giving a pledge.

I am aware that you have not asked any pledge, and I believe I know your sound judgment and good sense too well to think you desire

any such thing. It was, however, to prevent any misrepresentation on the part of others, that I have felt it my duty to say thus much on the subject.

I am, respectfully, your obedient servant,

MILLARD FILLMORE.

W. MILLS, Esq., Chairman.

Now, Fellow-Citizens, after reading this letter of Mr. Fillmore, what other opinion can you entertain of him than that he is disposed to join in legislation by Congress, which will strike the most effective and fatal blows at the rights, interests and dignity of the Southern States? Our opponents may endeavor to do away with the conviction this letter must produce, by bringing forward another, lately addressed to Governor Gayle of Alabama. Read and reflect upon that letter, and you will find that he does not retract in the slightest degree any declaration in the Mills' letter. To Governor Gayle he says: "That by the Constitution of the United States, the whole power over that question (Slavery) was vested in the several States where the institution was tolerated;" and again: "I did not conceive that Congress had power over it, or was in any way responsible for its continuance in the several States where it existed." But not one word is there, of his views of the question of the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, and the Territories of the United States; or of the prohibition of the trade in slaves between the slave States; or of the admission of new States tolerating slavery; or, in fine, of the Wilmot Proviso. Upon all, except the last, you will find his views in his letter above cited to Mr. Mills. Upon the last, his admirers and advocates of the Rough and Ready Club, are, perhaps, able to inform you.

In opposing the election of Zachary Taylor and Millard Fillmore for the first offices in your gift, we war not with the men but with their political views. No personal hostility actuates us. To defeat their aspirations we need only resort to a plain exposition of truths. These speak so forcibly for us, that we cannot be tempted to seek the ignoble aids of detraction and misrepresentation. The Democratic party of Louisiana, aye, and of the whole Union, can with confidence appeal to the verdict of the nation, as to which of the great political parties of the land have introduced the most of personal acerbity and rancor into our political contests, and by which the work of personal calumny, abuse and detraction has been most systematically and habitually pursued.

NEW ORLEANS, *September 11th*, 1848.